

CLAIMS

The invention claimed is:

1. A computer-implementable method for providing a consumer-to-consumer payment service, comprising:

receiving from a first remote computer a registration by a payor of a payment instrument;

receiving from a second remote computer a registration by a payee of a disbursement instrument;

receiving from the first remote computer a command from the payor to pay the payee an amount of money;

obtaining an authorization for a transfer of the amount of money from the payor through the payment instrument to a first intermediary bank account; and

ordering a transfer of the amount of money from a second intermediary bank account through the disbursement instrument to the payee.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein obtaining the authorization for the transfer of the amount of money comprises passing a risk of nonpayment by the payor to a third party.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the authorization for the transfer of the amount of money comprises an authorization for an additional amount of money to cover the cost of the consumer-to-consumer payment service.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the first intermediary bank account and the second intermediary bank account are identical.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the first intermediary bank account and the second intermediary bank account are owned by an entity running the consumer-to-consumer payment service.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the payment instrument comprises a flash cash deposit.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein receiving from the first remote computer the registration by the payor of the payment instrument further comprises:

prearranging a cash deposit to be made by the payor in person at a deposit location; and

receiving notification from a flash cash processor that the payor has completed the deposit.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the payment instrument comprises a credit card.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein receiving from the first remote computer the registration by the payor of the payment instrument further comprises:

receiving from the payor registration information comprising a name, address, card association, card number, and card expiration date;

sending the registration information to a credit card processor;

receiving a comparison of the address and an address of record for a holder of the credit card; and

determining whether the comparison indicates a sufficiently close match between the address and the address of record for the holder of the credit card.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein obtaining the authorization for the transfer of the amount of money comprises:

requesting that a credit card processor charge the amount of money against the credit card and transfer the amount of money to the first
5 intermediary bank account; and

receiving a decision whether the charge is accepted based upon decision factors comprising a spending limit for the credit card, a current balance for the credit card, and the amount of money.

10 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the payment instrument comprises an electronic fund transaction.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein receiving from the first remote computer the registration by the payor of the payment instrument further
15 comprises:

receiving from the payor registration information comprising a name, a routing number for a bank account to be used in the electronic fund transaction, and an account number for the bank account;

20 sending the registration information to an electronic fund transaction processor; and

receiving a decision, based on a review of a negative history file, whether future electronic fund transaction requests will be accepted by the electronic fund transaction processor.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein obtaining the authorization for the transfer of the amount of money comprises:

requesting that an electronic fund transaction processor debit a bank account of the payor and credit the first intermediary bank account using an automated clearing house; and

receiving a decision whether the request is accepted based upon decision factors comprising a current balance for the bank account of the payor and the amount of money.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein the payment instrument comprises a paper check.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein receiving from the first remote computer the registration by the payor of the payment instrument comprises:

prearranging a check deposit to be made by the payor through a paper check sent through a postal service; and

receiving notification from a paper check processor that the paper check has cleared.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the disbursement instrument comprises an electronic fund transaction.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein receiving from the second remote computer the registration by the payee of the disbursement instrument further comprises:

receiving from the payee registration information comprising a name, a routing number for a bank account to be used in the electronic fund transaction, and an account number for the bank account;

sending the registration information to an electronic fund transaction processor; and

receiving notification that the bank account to be used in the electronic fund transaction exists.

18. The method of claim 1, wherein the disbursement instrument comprises a paper check.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein receiving from the second remote computer the registration by the payee of the disbursement instrument further comprises:

receiving from the payee an address to which the paper check should be mailed; and

receiving from the second remote computer a registration by the payee of a credit card to help prevent fraud by the payee and to enable chargebacks.

20. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving a request from the payor for information about prior transactions of the payor; and

providing the payor with the information about the prior transactions.

21. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving a request from the payee for information about prior transactions of the payee; and
providing the payee with the information about the prior transactions.

22. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 1.

23. A computer system adapted to perform the method of claim 1.

24. A computer-implementable method for providing a consumer-to-consumer payment service, comprising:

offering a first plurality of financial instrument types to a payor at a first remote computer;

5 receiving from the first remote computer a registration by the payor of a payment instrument comprising one of the first plurality of financial instrument types;

receiving from a second remote computer a registration by a payee of a disbursement instrument;

10 receiving from the first remote computer a command from the payor to pay the payee an amount of money;

obtaining an authorization for a transfer of the amount of money from the payor through the payment instrument to a first intermediary bank account; and

15 ordering a transfer of the amount of money from a second intermediary bank account through the disbursement instrument to the payee.

25. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 24.

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26. A computer system adapted to perform the method of claim 24.

27. A computer-implementable method for providing a consumer-to-consumer payment service, comprising:

offering a first plurality of financial instrument types to a payor at a first remote computer;

5 receiving from the first remote computer a registration by the payor of a payment instrument comprising one of the first plurality of financial instrument types;

offering a second plurality of financial instrument types to a payee at a second remote computer;

10 receiving from the second remote computer a registration by the payee of a disbursement instrument comprising one of the second plurality of financial instrument types;

receiving from the first remote computer a command from the payor to pay the payee an amount of money;

15 obtaining an authorization for a transfer of the amount of money from the payor through the payment instrument to a first intermediary bank account; and

ordering a transfer of the amount of money from a second intermediary bank account through the disbursement instrument to the payee.

20 28. The method of claim 27, wherein the first plurality of financial instrument types are selected from the group consisting of flash cash deposit, credit card, electronic fund transaction, virtual private payment account, and paper check.

25 29. The method of claim 27, wherein the second plurality of financial instrument types are selected from the group consisting of electronic fund transaction, virtual private payment account, and paper check.

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